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THE
SPEECH
(AT LENGTH)
OF THE
HON. C. J. FOX,
AGAINST THE
ADDRESS TO HIS MAJESTY,
APPROVING OF THE REFUSAL TO ENTER INTO
A NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE
WITH THE
FRENCH REPUBLIC.

WITH A
LIST OF THE MINORITY,
&c. &c. &c.

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THE

STEECH

OF

FOR J. C. MOH



SPEECH
OF THE
HON. C. J. FOX.*

SIR,

I AM sure you will do me the credit to believe that, at this late hour, (between two and three o'clock) exhausted as the patience and attention of the House must be, nothing but a deep sense of my duty could have induced me to have troubled you upon this occasion.

Sir,

* This speech was delivered in the debate for voting an Address to his Majesty for the following Royal Message, and the papers referring to it:

" GEORGE R.

" The supplies granted to the commencement of the present Session having been calculated to provide only for the first months of the year, his Majesty now recommends it to the House, to make such further provision as they may judge necessary, under the present circumstances, for the several branches of the public service, and for the vigorous prosecution of the war; and his Majesty has given directions that the proper estimates for this purpose should be laid before the House.

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" His

Sir, my Honourable Friend stated, and stated truly, that we had arrived at a new æra of the war; and I would ask the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, whether by the time he has bestowed in answering my Honourable Friend, by the pains he has taken to travel back to the origin of the war, and by the manner in which he has touched upon all the topics that have been introduced since the war, I say, I would ask the Right Honourable Gentleman himself, whether he does not consider this as a new æra?

Sir, in this the seventh year of the most burthenfome war in which this or any nation ever was engaged, a new æra is proposed, upon ideas which have so often been held out to us; upon calculations which have so frequently misled us; upon a knowledge of human nature and common sense

“ His Majesty has thought proper, on this occasion, to direct that there should be laid before the House copies of communications recently received from the enemy, and of the answers which had been returned thereto by his Majesty’s command.

“ His Majesty entertains the fullest confidence that those answers will appear to this House to have been conformable to that line of conduct which was required from his Majesty on this occasion, by his regard to all the most important interests of his dominions: and his Majesty having no object more at heart than that of contributing, as soon as the situation of affairs shall render it practicable, to the establishment of the general tranquillity of Europe, on a sure and solid foundation; and of providing effectually for the security and permanent prosperity of his faithful people, places a firm reliance on the continued support of his Parliament, and on the zeal and perseverance of his subjects in such measures as may best tend to confirm the signal advantages which have been obtained to the common cause in the course of the last campaign, and to conduct the great contest in which his Majesty is engaged to a safe and honourable conclusion.

G. R.”

sense on which expeditions have been undertaken and have failed; and upon notions of the supposed ruin of the finances and resources of the enemy, with which the House have so often been deceived.

Gracious God, Sir! is it less than five years ago that we were told, that France was in the jaws of ruin? That we were assured she was;—what! not in the jaws of ruin alone, but in the very gulph of bankruptcy? That she was in such a situation, that nothing but making peace with her could enable her to molest this country? Upon these predictions and assurances have we gone on from year to year, and now, at the end of the seventh year, we are gravely desired not only to renew the war, but that no man may be able to see an end of it, principles are laid down upon which it may be carried on to all eternity!

Sir, his Majesty's Ministers, when they entered into the negotiation at Lisle, directed Lord Malmfbury to say, that recriminating reproaches did not evince a sincere desire for the restoration of Peace: I have the authority of Ministers for saying, that being a friend to peace with, I believe, a real majority of this House, and a much larger majority of the Nation, I should think it my duty to abstain from all recriminations. The Right Honourable Gentleman has thought it necessary to enter into the whole charge relative to the war; I certainly shall not follow him; but I will state to the House fairly and openly, what my opinion of the war has always been—that it was a war of aggression against France.

Sir, that Austria and Prussia were the aggressors, does any one now entertain a doubt? Have not
all

all the persons who were in the confidence of the unfortunate Louis XVI. proved, that between him and Austria there was an intimate connection and correspondence? Do I say that there was a treaty entered into for dismembering France? No. But though a treaty of Pavaria had no existence, does the Right Honourable Gentleman deny the authenticity of the declaration asserted by M. Bertrand de Milleville to have been entered into at Mantua? Does not that declaration express a wish of interfering in the internal concerns of France with a great army? But there was no treaty, and because there was not, we are desired to believe there was nothing.

Sir, the best way for all of us to consider the subject, is to put it to the bosoms of men what the declaration which was entered into by Austria and Prussia at Pilnitz? That they would not interfere till they could persuade other powers to join them. Now I would ask any man in the House whether, if two powers were to declare that they were not ready then, but that they would wait till they could unite all the powers, for the purpose of interfering in the internal concerns of Great Britain, I would, I say, ask any man whether he would not consider that as an act of aggression? But the case with respect to Great Britain is different—True, Sir: and yet, after all the acts which the Right Hon. Gentleman has enumerated, there is only one upon which I think much stress is to be laid—the decree of the 19th of November; a decree which, if construed literally, the Right Hon. Gentleman says, amounted to a declaration of war against all the nations of Europe. M. Chauvelin gives an explanation of that decree, and of the transaction
relative

relative to the navigation of the Scheldt. But that explanation the Right Hon. Gentleman contends was not a satisfactory one.—It might be so: and yet I must here observe, that when the French Ambassador was dismissed, this unsatisfactory explanation was not stated as the ground of his dismissal, but the murder of Louis XVI.

But supposing the explanation offered not to have been a satisfactory one, is it, I say, to be asserted, that that is to exclude all other explanations? If the explanation offered by M. Chauvelin was insufficient, why did you not say so? Did you hold out any ground upon which peace could be preserved? The navigation of the Scheldt was one of the alleged causes of the war. Did you say so?—Did you put it in the power of France to enter into an explanation upon that subject?

The Right Hon. Gentleman has upon this day read a very important paper, which was never produced before, and of the existence of which I was totally ignorant;—I mean the instructions transmitted to our Minister at the Court of Petersburg. Of the temper and nature of those instructions I completely approve. Yet I cannot help remarking, that the Right Hon. Gentleman, so far from taking any credit to himself for them, but seems rather to consider them as affording matter for censure.

Quod solum excusat, hoc solum miror illo.

I think the composition of that paper excellent, the directions conveyed in it wise, and the only thing I regret is, that it never was acted on. The nature of the paper I understand to be this; we proposed

proposed to join to prevent a general war, we proposed terms of peace. Now I would put it to any man, if that communication had been made to Paris as well as Russia, he does not think it would have been productive of substantial good? I have already said, that I think not only the thoughts, the theory, and the words of that paper to be good, but that the deed was commendable. —Acted upon, however, as it was, I can compare it only to the East India dispatches. We read them, and every thing appears to be wise and just; yet the conduct is the very reverse. How the Right Hon. Gentleman and his colleagues could send such a paper, while they were acting so opposite a part, while they were insulting M. Chauvelin, by dismissing him, I am utterly at a loss to guess. But France then declared war against us. Was the sending away M. Chauvelin a declaration of war? I know, if I look at books upon the subject, I must answer in the negative; but in this case a treaty of commerce existed between the two countries. That treaty specified what circumstances should attend a cessation of the intercourse between them. It says—"we shall consider the sending away the Minister of Great Britain from Paris, or the Minister of France from London, as a declaration of war."—And here let me accuse the Right Hon. Gentleman, in his own language, of being over pacific.

If France was really the aggressor, how comes it that Prussia was never called upon as she might have been? Why Sir, because it was known that on the part of Prussia and Austria it was the most foul and wicked aggression, and is to be set against any of the external enormities of France.

Of

Of the transactions of that period I shall not enter into a retrospective view ; but let any Gentleman look back, and he will see in Austria a most fixed and hostile disposition. Did not she state to the French Minister at Paris, not her fears of the external aggressions of France, but of the clubs and societies at Paris ?

Sir, I beg to have it understood once for all, that though I am stating the instances in which France has been falsely accused, I am not the defender of the external or internal politics of the French Revolution. That politics was certainly bad. But what does the guilt of France amount to ?—That she has adopted the politics of the House of Bourbon—that she has faithfully imitated the ambitious principles of the Bourbon family—that she has trod in the steps of Louis XIV.

It may be said, that this was a long while ago—that Louis XIV. has been many years dead. But has the operation of his principles ceased in France for any period since his death, except during the administration of Cardinal Richelieu ? My complaint therefore against the Republic is, that she has closely imitated Louis XIV.

We complain not only of the conquests of France, but of her making new Governments for the countries she has conquered. What was the case of Louis XIV. ? Have we forgotten that in every territory, in every city he conquered, he established chambers of claims, to ascertain what claims that territory or that city had upon any other part of Europe.

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He went to war with the Republic of Holland.—The Republic had not treated him in a manner consistent with his dignity—That might be a good cause of war. He went to war with Spain. As a short exception to the policy of Charles II. he declared war, and formed the tripple alliance against France, one of the wisest measures that ever was adopted. But what did the powers at war do? They did not spare Louis XIV. they called him a monster of injustice.

It was proposed to force him to restore all his conquests. What was the language of that great statesman, one of the greatest that ever lived, De Wit? He said, “No—if you had united, and could have prevented these conquests, it would have been well; but when the war has been carried on for some time, peace must be made, not with reference to the origin of the war, but to what may be fairly exacted?”

Now, Sir, I maintain this should have been the policy of Russia and this country to France.—When the Republic had been attacked by Austria and Prussia, and had gained some advantages; though she had taken Savoy upon such unjust, frivolous, and Bourbon-like pretences: I say, after she had gained some advantages, she ought to have had a compensation allowed her, and it should have been firmly said to her, beyond that we will not go.—Of the transactions respecting the capture of Savoy, the Right Hon. Gentleman has better information than I can have; it was certainly a most Bourbon-like act.

Our great historian, Hume, who is a philosophical writer, and in many respects to be relied on,
has

has an affection, almost amounting to childishness, for Princes ; he speaks of Louis IV. in terms more favourable than almost any other historian : but he says of that Monarch, " he was unfortunate in this, that though he managed his enterprizes with great skill, and conducted his plans with great abilities, yet he was unfortunate in never having but one fair pretence for war."

In her seizure of Savoy, France had made use of the words *convenances morales et physiques*, a most Bourbon-like phrase. Did not the Minister from Savoy protest against the act ? Yet was there any stir here about it ? All these things were done before 1792 ; but there was then a most decided neutrality in this country, though many of the horrors complained of had been committed, and the King had been during that time kept as a prisoner. But for this neutrality, which made many parts of Europe consider them as friendly even to the French, I give Ministers no praise.— They should have said to France, we do not believe your assertion of hatred for foreign conquest. You are Frenchmen, and you cannot so soon have thrown off the Bourbon principles. But we will tell you what we shall consider as an attack upon the balance and security of Europe. That is the part they should have acted ; instead of which, what did they do ? They hung back and did nothing. They did not like M. Chauvelin's explanation, yet they would not receive any other ; and when the question of peace or war was to be decided, they would not tell upon what conditions they would make peace, nor what they considered to be the aggression.

There is one subject which has been so much relied upon, that I hope the House will allow me to say a word or two upon it—I mean the subject of Religion. It is not one which I have particularly studied; but if I know any thing at all of it, it is, that he that makes the New Testament the rule of his conduct, will not find, in any part of it, Religion to be a justifiable cause of war.

Sir, with respect to other countries, it has been said that France has behaved in a manner disgusting to every part of Europe. True; but to fill up the catalogue, many instances might have been produced not quite so culpable in their nature. The King of Sardinia, when the first attack was made upon him, was he not actually a belligerent power, receiving a subsidy from Great Britain? In other instances of the injustice of France I will not enter—I allow them. But I have somewhere read in Sir Walter Ralieggh's History of the World, that there was once between two nations a dreadful battle, from which no one escaped alive; for both sides used none but offensive weapons.

Now, if the nations of Europe chuse the war of recriminations; if they use none but offensive weapons, where shall be found the shield of protection and defence?—Russia seized Poland. Now, if it is material to know the character of a power with which you are merely about to treat, it is much more material to know the character of an ally with whom you are about to enter into the closest connection. Sir, let me ask what in the conduct of the French to foreign powers has exceeded the conduct of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, to Poland? But the Hon. Gentlemen says we regretted

regretted the partition of that country.—True, you did regret it ; but that is all you did. You regretted the act, yet you united with the actors ; but with those you have committed crimes, not more enormous, you cannot consent to be upon terms even of common amity.—But though Poland was conquered, the matter of doing it was merciful and mild ! The hero was as much superior to Bonaparte in fortune and in talents as in virtue and humanity ! Warsaw, and the inhabitants of the suburb of Praga ! This magnanimous hero, supposed even to have a bigotted attachment to religion ; he enters the suburb of Praga, the larger part of Warsaw ; he gives it up to the pillage of his soldiers ; no rank, no age, no sex is spared ; men, women, and children sucking at the breast, all mercilessly murdered ! ! !—And for what. Because they had dared to join in a wish to improve that Constitution, which had been confessed to stand so much in need of it —But I do not mean to contend, that because of the conduct of Russia towards Poland, we ought never to make peace with her ? No, Sir—but that we ought not to enter into an alliance with her.

The Right Hon. Gentleman next spoke of Switzerland ; of that country to which every man feels a kind of native attachment—but the Right Hon. Gentleman goes further, and views her as a country respected for her love of peace. Yet, who, I would ask, proposed to her first to abandon that pacific principle ? A noble relation of mine, Lord Robert Fitzgerald, in a note transmitted to the Canton of Berne, states that neutrality under the present circumstances is highly criminal. But was

this mode of conduct adopted only to Switzerland? —What was our language to Tuscany and Genoa? An honourable Gentleman informs us, that the note to the Grand Duke is all a fable, a mere fabrication.—But did not Lord Hervey say that neutrality was not to be endured? He went into the closet of the Grand Duke. I certainly was not there, and cannot be supposed to know what passed; but it was the general belief at Florence at the time, that his Lordship put 'his watch upon the table, and pointed to the specific time during which the Grand Duke was to decide.

It is true, that Lord Hervey was recalled; but was his mission recalled? Was the Duke suffered to make peace? He did afterwards certainly make peace with France. It is also certain that he was treated at a subsequent period with much indignity. But what do I infer from these things? Why, Sir, that this war has produced from the great states to the small, from the French as well as the English, more insolence of language and of treatment than ever was experienced in any former war. If these, then, are the motives for war, it will never cease as long as we have a gun or a guinea left.

But I would ask first, is the account of our treatment of Genoa a mere fable and forgery? If it is, Ministers are highly culpable in not having publicly declared it to be so. Have we not heard that Mr. Drake maintained to Genoa, that neutrality was intolerable? But the French, it seems, have behaved ill every where. They seized Venice—I do not pretend to justify the act. But surely it is not quite fair to state only one side of the question.

question. The French asserted that Venice committed a great outrage upon their soldiers. I do not give a willing ear to such statements. But they possessed themselves of Venice, and gave it to Austria. They stole it, and the Emperor received it. But that, it is said, is not the same thing. The Emperor might take it as a compensation. And such is the argument used upon a subject, which has often been the object of discussion in this House—I mean the Slave Trade. Enquire of an agent for that trade, when we have imputed to the abominable traffic the horror of tearing the mother from her children, the father from his family; what is his reply? “I did not tear them away. They were brought to me in the way of trade:—I bought them—they were guilty of crimes,—crimes! I have heard of one sort—witchcraft.”

Such is the precious defence of Austria—I gave *quid pro quo*. I gave half a million of men to be placed under the Austrian yoke in another. This internal traffic, whether in white or in black, which, I do contend, has extended to England, Austria, and above all to Russia, has appeared more enormous in this war than in any other.

Sir, we talk of our allies, I do not know who they are, we are allied with Russia. How have the French attacked her? The magnanimous Emperor Paul is an heretic as well as we are. He seizes the Commandery of Malta, he makes himself the head of a Roman Catholic Establishment. He says openly, that he fights for the restoration of Monarchy. Are we his allies, and do we go with him in his projects? How does he shew his abhorrence of the interference of France in the
internal

internal concerns of other nations?—He says to Denmark, you have seditious clubs.—No Danish vessels shall enter my ports. He holds a menacing language to Hamburgh. Oh! but Spain is much worse! The Russian Minister is recalled from Madrid. The Emperor declares war, the Spanish Minister is recalled from Petersburg, and in the Russian declaration the Emperor says to Spain (though the Russian Minister had been recalled before), you recalled your Minister. This is the principle of social order, and these the virtues which we regret the absence of.

With respect to France, it is true that she has committed many acts of injustice. But how does this bear upon the question in its present state?—The Right Hon. Gentleman says, it is true we have entered into negotiation.

Sir, I do desire the attention of the House to this most serious warning. He cannot now enter into negotiation.—Why? First, because of the Revolution. Why then, we say, that in 1796, with a Government as objectionable as the present, you did negotiate. Baffled in that negotiation, another was entered into in 1797. Will Gentlemen attend to these facts?

We have heard this day, for the first time, an honest account of these negotiations. Ministers confess they apprehended much danger from success. Sir, I do not mean to mistake their meaning; what I say is, that though they were sincere in wishing success, yet that they feared great danger would result from it. Sir, that in the state of the world, when just recovered from war, there is still
danger,

danger, may be true. But in the present case they must have some comparative view, something to convince them that the danger of peace would have been as great as the danger of war.

They state, that they undertook those negotiations from the unequivocal sense of a great part of the people. Sir, I am glad to hear that the unequivocal sense of the people is for peace. Not that I ever doubted it—but if I had stated in this place, that such was the sense of the people, I should have been told, you have a petition there, we have another here: petitions are procured in strange ways, and in fact, Sir, there is no period in which I should not have been told, that the people did not wish for negotiations at that time. Now, however, we learn, that the unequivocal sense of the people is for peace.

The first negotiation went off, as my Honourable Friend says, on the question of Belgium; as the Right Hon. Gentleman asserts on a question of principle. He says, we negotiated to please the people, and we broke off because of the monstrous principles advanced by France. But did they tell the people fairly? Did they say, that the enemy urged a principle incompatible with all negotiation?—No, Sir, they concluded by saying, that whenever that Republic, covered with all its enormities, wished to renew a negotiation, they would consent to renew it. And, in fact, in 1797, a second negotiation was entered into, which was broke off after the Revolution at Paris in September.

I should have expected, when the insult at Lisle was fresh in their memories, that they would have
talked

talked a language more warlike. I should have thought they would have said, the negotiations we entered into in 1796 and 1797 prove that no negotiation can be prosecuted with success—but on the contrary, they publish a declaration that they were ready to negotiate again whenever symptoms of an equal readiness appeared on the part of the enemy, and though they had gained a great victory, they added, that they were willing to consent to the same terms they had offered. Now mark the result.—In 1797, they say that experience proves the French to be unreasonable in their demands, but still they are willing to offer the same terms of peace.—Now, however, having gained two or three more victories, they do not offer the same terms nor any others, but they refuse to enter into any negotiation at all.—What, Sir, does this shew? Why that when you are beaten, you will negotiate, but that you will not negotiate when you are successful.—What is this, then, but a *bellum ad internecionem*?

I remember, Sir, that in the course of the declarations and manifestoes published on the subject there was a good deal of explicitness. We said, that his Majesty, by expressing his willingness to conclude peace on the same principles and terms he had before proposed, had established a test.—That test declared, that they who returned such an answer as the one which had been returned by Lord Grenville, avoided all discussion: Having made this declaration, I ask, do they not confess that by refusing Bonaparte's overture, they refuse all discussion?

The Right Hon. Gentleman says, his wishes are for the restoration of the Bourbon family, but only
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with the consent of the people. Sir, I wish the French may have that family, if they wish it themselves—but if I am to wish that they should chuse, I must as an Englishman, as a friend to my country, and to peace, never wish that a Bourbon may be at the head of the affairs of France.

Sir, for the last century we have been continually at war, on account of the ambition and perfidy of the Bourbons.

An Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Canning) seemed to be very much delighted with an Address presented to King William by the House of Commons. In that Address the House express their attachment to King William, and he thinks it quite astonishing how it applies to the present time. I suppose, Sir, some previous offers of negotiation had been made by Louis, for if there had not, it is not in point. Because the House of Commons declared their readiness to support William in a war, when no offer had been made to negotiate, the Hon. Gentleman finds out that that is quite applicable to the present period, when an offer has been made.

The Hon. Gentleman has alluded to words, which he heard somewhere, that the publication of certain letters was as great a disgrace to the persons publishing them, as to the authors of their contents. Sir, if ever the Hon. Gentleman, when younger, had turned his thoughts to the law, he would have learned to find causes more in point. Former Governments have published letters. It is not the publication that is objected to. It is the manner, the notes, the ribaldry, which is not defended from indignation by its extreme stupidity.

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I beg leave to say, with the person alluded to, that war increases consumption, and of course scarcity. But eminently indeed must it increase it, if it be true that corn is in the proportion of two to one dearer here than in France.

The Honourable Gentleman, it would appear, has not enough to do here, yet this mode of answering things, said in another place, is not quite fair to the persons mentioning the same opinion as he does, particularly as in that place they are in no want of numbers. Perhaps, however, the Hon. Gentleman is to be sent to that place himself. He may be sent there with as much propriety as many of those that have been, and I am sure I mean not to speak against them; but the Hon. Gentleman will, I should think, have enough to do with answering arguments in this place, without disparaging one of the best understandings, I will venture to say, in the country.

Sir, the Right Hon. Gentleman has said, that the negotiation of 1797 redeemed the pledge of 1796; but what is to redeem the pledge of 1797? What shifts are they now put to? The people were then confessedly for peace. Are they less for peace now? The Hon. Gentleman goes farther, "He says questions of peace and war are not to be decided upon extremes, but upon a balance and comparison. He says, finding the difficulty of going on in the usual mode, he was forced to have recourse to a solid system of finance, but that that system could not succeed without the consent of the people—he had to hope himself of success from negotiation, but he complied with the wishes of the people." He entered into a negotiation, France
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uses him ill ; but I have gained my point, he says, and have shewn my sincerity. He gets his solid system of finance, first his treble assessment, then his tax on income. How did he obtain it ? By pretending to be a friend to negotiation.—Now he has carried his point, he is no longer a friend to it. I only, he says, negotiate by pretending myself a friend ; but now you have aided me in my solid system, now I tell you honestly there is no safety in negotiating : Sir, to whom that would be honest, I know not, it would not be so to the people. The reign of Charles II. has been referred to. He declared against France. He might say, I wanted a solid system of finance. The Right Honourable Gentleman says so, but that there are no means of getting it, but by pretending to be a friend to negotiation, and by being so in reality for a time.

And here let me state one thing to the Hon. Gentleman, who says, we must have experience and evidence of facts. If I am to have this experience I say we must negotiate again. He contends that the negotiation at Lisle encreased the spirit and confidence of the country. To which I reply, that the only way, then, to continue people in that system is, to renew the negotiation. But the restoration of the Bourbon family is what we wish, but it is not the *sine qua non*. Now I would put this case—if in the private concerns of life I had an estate to sell, and I said, give me 1000l. for it. There may be other ways without the 1000l. but if you mention no other, and if you refuse to hear any other, I then say, that the 1000l. is the *sine qua non*. You say the Bourbon family is not the only way. In your nonsensical language, which I have nothing to do with, you set a limitation to possibilities ;

possibilities ; but still you say that the restoration of the Bourbon family is what you wish, but it is not the only mode. Do you give any other *projet* yourself ? Do you ask for a *contre projet* ? No, for fear you should have one, you suggest no other mode but the restoration of the Bourbons. Is not this saying, that we will fight for the Bourbons ? But that, if felt, would be too unpalatable in this country.

The Honourable Gentleman then says, I will not say there may not be cases in which we will not treat with Bonaparte. But there are some conditions. We must have experience and evidence of facts. That the French are capable of maintaining the relations of amity will not be denied. But the experience the Honourable Gentleman wants is, that they have renounced the wicked acts of their predecessors.

Sir, these are not conciliatory words. But are they practicable ? Do you complain of their conduct in going to war, though you have done the same yourself ? But it seems, you want to have evidence of their pacific disposition in time of war ; that is, till you have behaved peaceably during a period of war we will not make peace with you.—We must have a better opinion of you. Is war likely to encrease good opinion ?—In duels indeed it happens sometimes that both parties confess each other to be men of honour, and live in friendship. There is something, by the-by, ridiculous even in this : But when this is applied to countries, it is more so. You are to beat each other into a good opinion.

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There are four ways by which we may yet have a good opinion of Bonaparte: First, By a more conciliating mode of conduct—Is this reasonable to expect? War inflames the passions, exaggerates faults, encreases animosities, inflames hatred. Secondly, if the people of France, contrary to our expectations, should acquiesce in his government. Whether that government is an usurpation I have no inclination to discuss; but I certainly have not that opinion of the sense of a people to suppose that because it is an usurpation, they will therefore not acquiesce in it. Cromwell was an usurper—Does the Right Hon. Gentleman not think that there are many passages in his life in which he was insincere, the self-denying ordinance and exempting himself from it. But is there any man of sense who thinks that any nation would have done wisely in not making peace with Cromwell merely on account of the character of that great usurper? The people did acquiesce in the government of Cromwell. It may be said that the splendour of his character, and his victories abroad, raised the nation so high as to induce it to this acquiescence. Will it be said that Bonaparte is not a man of great abilities? Will it be said that he is not doing that which is most flattering to France, holding too high a tone to foreign powers? Will not the people see that that peace which Bonaparte might agree to now, he would not agree to hereafter? Is it not possible he may feel as the Right Hon. Gentleman, and say in 1800 I wanted the people to acquiesce in a solid system of finance; and having got it, I find the Minister of England perfidious, and that no negotiation can be prosecuted with success; will he not have then one interest less to make peace?

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The third mode is, if the efforts of the allies should be less successful than is expected in stirring up France against Bonaparte. Sir, I have often blamed the Right Hon. Gentleman for dissimulation; but this, I own, is an honest confession. He says, to Bonaparte, "you may be deposed, I mean to raise the people against you; if I succeed I may send you away, but if I do not, then I will make peace with you." But what sort of a peace can you expect from hopes thus baffled, and projects thus defeated? What permanent treaty can be made from imbecility and disappointment? The Right Hon. Gentleman said once on another occasion :

*Possit quæ plurima virtus
Esse fuit, toto certatum est corpore regni.*

He now in English repeats the same principle, and says, "we will treat when we find all our efforts of war vain, and all our designs of hostilities impracticable."

If Ministers had taken a contrary turn, the benches of this House, Sir, would have resounded with their praises. Perhaps we might not have had an unanimous vote of thanks, for there are many good men, one particularly in the other House, a Noble Friend of mine, Lord Fitzwilliam, who, I am confident, would not have concurred in such a vote. But what is the House of Commons come to, if they still support the Minister, and yet feel in their consciences that had he accepted the overture of Bonaparte, they would have been the first to thank him?—But our passions, it seems, are to be raised by the situation of France. If Gentlemen choose to inveigh against the character of Bonaparte, I am not the man to under-
take

take his defence. Of his conduct I do not judge ; he has reformed his country by such reforms as military men generally adopt, that is by taking all the power to himself. To say that such conduct is unexampled is more than I can contend, but I cannot conceive how persons in this country can conceive such a violent indignation on the subject.

We do not deny that some degree of liberty may exist with military power. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has the power of putting the whole country under martial law, yet so far is that country from being enslaved, that we deem it precisely in the most happy situation for considering freely and fairly whether it will consent to a Union with this country. It is not therefore quite so much in character to inveigh in such terms against the operation of military authority.

But it seems Bonaparte broke his oaths. I am one perhaps, who think it were better, that all oaths of such kind were laid aside ; but such oaths must always be considered as binding on certain conditions. The illustrious patriots who took up arms against Charles I. may have been called rebels or traitors ; but I never heard that the violation of their oaths was alleged against them.— I never heard that the whole country was perjured at the Restoration, because they had taken the oaths to the Parliament.—At the Revolution the Earl of Devonshire was not considered as perjured, because he had taken the oaths to the Stuart family. But who brings up this question of oaths ? He who wishes to restore the Bourbon family, and make millions of people violate the oaths they have taken to the Republic. But
Bonaparte,

Bonaparte, it seems, after the treaty of Campo Formio, maintained the existence of the Republic of France and of the British Government to be incompatible. This is also the Right Honourable Gentleman's opinion; yet except these two illustrious characters, I do not know any other man in Europe who entertains it. May not these pretences be reciprocated from one side to another? Oh! pity the condition of man! Gracious God! that we should live to hear all the old prejudices so far done as to consider war to be the natural state of man, and peace to be difficult and dangerous.

Sir, I most earnestly implore the House to pause before it gives a sanction to the prosecution of a war upon the grounds now offered. If it were insisted by the Minister that it would be wise to pursue the contest until what he calls military despotism should be overturned, I beg the House to recollect the military despotism of Augustus Cæsar, a power which originally was an usurpation, but lasted seven or eight hundred years! I cannot, when talking of Generals and great men, help lamenting the virulent abuse which the House has frequently poured forth on the best and most worthy characters, whose praises have afterwards been readily acknowledged by the very same persons who so erroneously and wantonly calumniated them. I am no advocate for Bonaparte; but such a change of opinion may, perhaps, in future, operate in his favour.

To illustrate, however, this observation, I believe I may instance the case of General Washington, one of the greatest and best men of the age in which he lived. That illustrious personage is now no
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more—he lives, however, in the heart of every good man, and my humble panegyric can add nothing to his immortal fame. General Washington, it may be well remembered, particularly by the Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Dundas) who opened the debate, was at one time branded with every harsh and infamous epithet for his perseverance in the cause of Liberty and his Country; and yet, after success had crowned his efforts, he was hailed as the Saviour of America, and the Pacifier of Mankind.

The Right Honourable Secretary may imagine, that American Liberty is not a blessing—I differ from him very widely. Had a negotiation been then proposed to Washington, it would have immediately been asked—“What! treat with an American rebel!” No. But Fortune completely operated a different opinion, and his memory is now the subject of universal praise.

Louis XVIII. to conciliate the French, has published a proclamation that he is about to be restored to the throne of his ancestors with as ample powers as any of those ancestors ever possessed; he does not promise them a constitution of any kind which might tend to conciliate their support; he invites their assistance, with an assurance of indulging them with the most full and complete enjoyment of the ancient regime, with its happy appendages of Bastiles, Lettres de Cachet, Gabelle, &c.—With this Monarch's return into France, the French were also to look for the Nobility, who would doubtless seek to re-establish themselves in their domains, and to resume their privileges, so intimately connected with those of the Monarch.

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It is not now for me to inquire into the justice of those claims, the property has been transferred; the practicability of recovering it, when so distributed, is absurd to think of; besides, it could not, in many instances, be restored to the antient inheritors, without injustice to the present possessors, who had purchased it for a fair consideration.

Much emphasis had been laid on the conduct and zeal of the Chouans, and on the propriety of supporting them. I believe that in the heart of France, where these people appear, there exists a considerable attachment to Royalty—how the Government of France could contrive to compromise with that spirit, I cannot pretend to conjecture; but I beg leave to call to the memory of the House the once formidable insurrections of the Hugonots, and the policy of Henry IV. by which they were conciliated.—If Bonaparte should attempt some similar arrangement with the Chouans, he can meet no great obstacle to success in their attachment to their country, for what has our Government told them? “We will assist you while you can contrive to annoy the French Government, but we will not make a common cause with you.” Such is the language held to them, and what reliance can such professions of interested, temporary, and precarious assistance induce them to place on us?

Let me state what has been represented to me as a fact, and the truth of which I hope Ministry will investigate, that a stain may be removed from our national character—It is stated, that a party of Neapolitans, who had joined the French, were besieged in Castel de Nuovo by a detachment from the Royal Army of Naples, to whom they refused to surrender, but demanded that a British Officer should

should be brought forward, and to him they capitulated instantly; with him they did make terms, he promising them their personal safety and property. But, dreadful to relate! this property was sold, the prisoners murdered, and the cruel and diabolical monsters, who had captured them, are the very flesh of their miserable victims!!!

When are these horrors to cease? Why not make peace now?—Are the bowels and property of Englishmen nothing?—Are we, to please the Members of the present Administration, to wage a perpetual war? I am sorry they are instigated by hatred and animosity, by rancour and revenge, and, indeed, by every passion that leads to their extinction of civilization and humanity. But they are not, they say, to be checked in their desolating progress till the Bourbons are restored. We have before boasted of successful campaigns—We were repeatedly told of the capture of Valenciennes, Quesnoy, Condé, &c. which prepared some Gentlemen for a march to Paris, but still more sanguine hopes of success are now conceived than at this period: Where then was the expectation of peace? Since success leads only to war, that war may be *ad infinitum*. Good God! what a lamentable prospect is this for the country—for a mere speculation, or a real experiment, we are to persist in spilling the blood, in exhausting our treasure, in swelling the black catalogue of human miseries.

Let Gentlemen suppose themselves in the heat of battle, and contemplate the horrid consequences of implacable warfare. Had they been at the battle of Blenheim, and asked the soldier what he fought for, he would answer it was to restrain the ambitious projects of Louis XIV.; but if it any
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of the desperate contests which may ensue from the decision of this night, the soldiers would answer such a question, that they were wading through blood to see if the people of France would give Bonaparte a better character than we may negotiate with him. Why not tell Bonaparte at once, in a bold and manly manner, that you cannot make peace without including your allies? I appeal to the feelings of every man who hears me; I most earnestly implore him to aid me in checking the calamities of war; I hope that those who would have voted for the Address, had the overtures of the enemy been accepted, will aid me in opposing that of this evening, which pledges the House for the prosecution of the war."

On a Division the Numbers were :

Ayes for the Address . . .	265
Noes	64
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Majority . . .	201



LIST

LIST OF THE MINORITY,

WHO VOTED AGAINST THE ADDRESS.

J. Aftley	J. Jekyll
R. Adair	R. P. Knight
Sir J. Aubry	J. Kemp
J. Anson	Sir W. Lemon
J. R. Burch	Col. Lemon
Hon. E. Bouverie	Sir J. Leicester
Hon. W. H. Bouverie	J. M. Lloyd
Sir F. Bourdett	Sir W. Milner
G. Byng	J. Martin
G. Barclay	D. North
J. Brogden	J. Nicholls
R. Biddulph	W. Northey
W. W. Bird	W. Plomer
J. Courtney	Sir W. Pulteney
H. C. Coombe, Lord Mayor	Lord J. Russell
Sir L. Copley	Lord W. Russell
W. Colhoun	J. Richardson
Lord G. Cavendish	Hon. S. A. St. John
W. S. Denison	G. Shum
Hon. T. Erskine	C. Start
B. Edwards	A. Shakespeare
Sir H. Fletcher	Lord Stanley
Hon. C. J. Fox	W. Smith
C. Grey	Lord J. Townshend
J. Green	M. A. Taylor
J. Hare	Hon. H. Tufton
J. Harrison	G. Tierney
H. Howard	R. Vyner
Sir R. Hill	Sir E. Winnington
J. Heathcote	J. Walwyn
N. Jeffries	C. C. Western
W. Jolliffe	S. Wigley
	R. B. Sheridan
	S. Whitbread.

Tellers {

THE END.

